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"Our Part in the World's Struggle."

# A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE

CENTRE CHURCH, NEW BRITAIN,

AT A UNION SERVICE,

NOVEMBER 24, 1864.

BY LAVALETTE PERRIN,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN NEW BRITAIN.



HARTFORD:

PRESS OF CASE, LOCKWOOD & COMPANY.

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## CORRESPONDENCE.

To Rev. L. PERRIN,

*Dear Sir* :—Having heard your Thanksgiving sermon, we are of the opinion that it contains important principles and truths so clearly set forth, and withal so adapted to the exigencies of the times, that a more extended diffusion of its sentiments would be a public benefit. We therefore respectfully ask you for a copy for publication.

NEW BRITAIN, 28th November, 1864.

ALFRED ANDREWS,	H. B. BUCKHAM,
T. W. STANLEY,	OLIVER STANLEY,
WM. H. SMITH,	F. H. NORTH,
F. T. STANLEY,	W. A. CHURCHILL,
WALTER GLADDEN,	CHARLES NORTHEND,
N. W. STANLEY,	A. P. COLLINS,
SAMUEL ROCKWELL,	C. B. ERWIN,
HENRY STANLEY,	LEVI S. WELLS.

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NEW BRITAIN, Dec. 1, 1864.

Messrs. A. ANDREWS, T. W. STANLEY and others,

*Gentlemen* :—Your complimentary note of the 28th ult. I have just received, and thank you for the kind words it contains. In deference to your opinion and wish so courteously expressed, I will comply with your request as soon as I can consistently with other duties.

Respectfully yours,

LAVALETTE PERRIN.



## S E R M O N .

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PSALM 100: 1—5. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise; be thankful unto him and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

THIS Psalm is the pæan of a rejoicing people. It was composed and recorded for the service of public praise, and was doubtless first used on that sublime occasion of national joy and festivity, when the Ark of the Covenant, as the hallowed symbol of God's presence and favor was put in its place in the Temple of Solomon, with the shouts of an assembled nation.

The *circumstances* of that occasion were peculiar, and have never been repeated in the history of the world, but its *spirit* should enliven every season of joy among men, and quicken every expression of gratitude for blessings received, whether personal, social or national. The Psalm may be taken, therefore, as the key-note of this glad anniversary of ours, on which this nation is called by its Chief Magistrate to unite in a great anthem of Thanksgiving.

To us as a people, through the concurrent invitation of the President and the Governor, the voice of God is addressing this language—"Know ye that the Lord he is God: we are his people: Enter into his gates with thanksgiving; for the Lord is good." May God help us to catch the very spirit of these words at the threshold of our festival, and breathe it heavenward with such heart-emphasis as to carry it, redolent as myrrh and frankincense, into his presence-chamber on high.

Thanksgiving that is such truly—praise that reaches Heaven—comes from the heart. If we would truly thank and praise God then, we must *feel* what is expressed in this one hundredth Psalm. We must have our sensibilities kindled to a joyous and grateful glow by the belief that Jehovah is God—that we are his care—and that He is good. Have we good reason thus to believe—thus to feel? Let us see.

There are many reasons why we should thus believe and feel, not peculiar to the present time, but fitted to move us, if duly considered, at all times. The common blessings of providence and grace furnish such reasons. We might concentrate our thoughts upon a New England home, and make this with its countless comforts and enjoyments a special reason for feeling that the Lord is our God, and is very good. We might contrast our spiritual condition as a community with the condition of African, Asiatic, or even European communities, and draw from the contrast weighty reasons for gratitude and praise to Jehovah as our God, and very good. Or any one of many other common themes might be selected, and profitably studied, as furnishing reasons why we should enter these courts to-day with thanksgiving and the song of praise.

But a theme is suggested by the occasion itself, as a national Thanksgiving day, and the stirring events which have led to its appointment.

#### OUR PART AS A NATION IN THE WORLD'S STRUGGLE FOR REDEMPTION.

Let us give our thoughts to this subject, and see if we ought not, in view of what God is accomplishing by us, to rejoice in him as God—as our God—and as very good.

That we may catch a personal inspiration and quickening from this study, let us here at the outset link ourselves as real agents with passing events. What the theory of our government assumes as true, is in fact true of each one of us. We, the people, are the power—the government—the sovereignty. If there is privilege in this, there is also obligation, responsibility. Each one here to-day is a constituent.

responsible element of that nationality—that civil sovereignty—which is, under God, solving a great problem for the world. Whether man or woman, then, forget yourself for the time as a separate personality, and think of yourself as embodied in, and a part of, this national life of ours, which God is using to determine a world's conflict. Count all personal and individual interests as related by positive influence to that power which we call our nation, and let it be fully admitted here and now, that business, party, family, religion, everything which enters into your personal history, is an element of strength or of weakness in the nation's life: so that what is good, pure, noble, life-inspiring, in the character of the nation, comes from *you*, to the extent of your personal influence in that direction: and what is bad, vile, corrupting or destructive, comes from you, so far as you personally, in your private or social life, your business, your politics, or your religion, encourage that which is evil in kind or in tendency. Thus, whether you will it or not, you are linked to this nation's work and destiny, and can not shun a measure of responsibility for its glory or its shame. The nation's life is your life—the nation's work is your work—its glory is your glory, and its shame your shame. We, the people, are the power, and God is using us as such, in the world's bloody and prolonged struggle for redemption from the grasp and curse of oppression. Let us every one feel, then, that each sin of the nation is our sin—that each success of the nation is our success; and what God is doing for and by this nation, he is doing through us. Let this thought kindle in us a lofty purpose, as we do or suffer in the nation's struggle.

“LIBERTY” was the watchword of those who laid the foundations of this nation. Not license, lawlessness, plunder or spoliation; but liberty based upon justice and piety—Christian liberty, as the birthright of manhood—the fountain of social happiness. Permission to do right, not permission to do as one pleases, was the liberty they sought, found, loved and proclaimed. How to secure both liberty and good order in human society, has been the great problem, upon

which nations have worked for thousands of years. Into the solution of this problem the history of our nation has entered, and is to-day a leading quantity. To find its exact relations has been a work of time, involving serial and abrupt steps of progress, not always intelligible, and often wearing a decidedly perplexing aspect. But the dark epochs and bitter experiences of the nations in past history, have come from a misapprehension of true liberty—an attempt to set up or to vindicate something else in its place.

*“All men are created equal, and by God’s appointment have a right to life, to liberty, and to the pursuit of happiness.”* This principle was that pearl of great price for which those spiritual merchantmen of old England, the Puritans, came hither searching—this was that hidden treasure, at the discovery of which, they quickly sold all they had in the old world, and came and bought this field.

I need not dwell now upon the origin and growth of our nation. The leading facts have been made as familiar to you as household words. I need not rehearse here the history of our early struggles in developing and finally establishing a government upon the basis of universal liberty. You all are, or ought to be, familiar with that history; and no one who is so, can fail to see abundant reason for thanksgiving to-day and every day, that God carried our fathers through such self-denials and sufferings, such dark and stormy times, and enabled them in the face of manifold difficulties to frame and set in working order a government whose spirit and aim are set forth in the declaration “all men are created equal and entitled to liberty.” But if we omit here a special notice of their struggles, we must not fail to recognize the hand of God in calling our fathers to their work. The exodus of Israel from Egypt and their settlement and growth in the land of Canaan for the special purpose of preserving and disseminating the knowledge of the true God, are no more obviously God’s purposed work, than the exodus of our Pilgrim fathers from the old world and their settlement and enlargement here, as conservators of Christian freedom in its true and best sense. And he who

will, can see God's hand in our early history as clearly as in the history of the Hebrew commonwealth.

It will help to kindle the inspiration we need to-day, and bring us into living sympathy with those who have struggled before us in the same great cause, if the choir will sing just here, that spirited song—"Rock of Liberty"—which carries us back to scenes in which the Pilgrims wrought for us, in the nation's appointed work.

1. "O the firm old Rock! the wave-worn rock,  
That braved the blast and the billow's shock;  
It was born with Time on a barren shore,  
And it laughed with scorn at the ocean's roar;  
'T was here that first that Pilgrim band,  
Came weary up to the foaming strand,  
And the tree they reared in the days gone by—  
It lives—it lives—it lives—it lives—and ne'er shall die!
2. Thou stern old Rock! in the ages past  
Thy brow was bleached by the warring blast;  
But thy wintry toil with the wave is o'er,  
And the billows beat thy base no more;  
Yet countless as thy sands, old Rock,  
Are the hardy sons of the Pilgrim stock—  
And the tree &c., &c.
3. Then rest, old Rock! on the sea-beat shore;  
Thy sires are lulled by the breaker's roar;  
'T was here that first their hymns were heard  
O'er the startled cry of the ocean bird:  
'T was here they lived—'t was here they died—  
Their forms repose on the green hill's side;  
But the tree &c., &c."

Yes, the tree they reared yet lives; and for this we ought this day to thank God.

It is claimed by some that our fathers said more than they meant, in the public declaration—"all men are created equal, and invested with the rights of liberty." But if this was more than *they* meant, it is clearly only what God intended they should announce to the nations as the truth He was about to sift, and settle, and make the germ of our nationality. It may be that as God's high-priests in that age, they spake, not of themselves. If so, then it was prophecy, and must have its fulfillment.

“*All men are created equal, and by God’s appointment are entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.*” What is this but saying that “God is no respecter of persons, but hath made of one blood all nations of men?” Yet this was said nearly eighteen centuries ago, and is among the first teachings of Christianity.

But we must not without protest admit the claims of those who by special pleading make out that Hancock, and Adams, and Sherman, and Franklin, and Jefferson, and Morris, and all that peerless company of “Signers of the Declaration,” did not understand the language which they used. It may be true that some of them did not at the time fully consider all its meaning in special applications that might afterwards be made. But all did at the time, doubtless, fully comprehend the principle announced, and see and feel, that the nobler instincts and the unbiassed reason of man, as well as the word of God, recognize it as a truth. And many of these very men did afterwards boldly and nobly make that special application of this truth, which has been from the first, the chief, if not the only, source of real danger to our national existence. No doubt they understood what they said, and announced the great principle of human equality and liberty as what they believed and purposed to adopt and maintain.

Here then is the truth, the principle, the divinely sanctioned germ of our nationality, which God dropt into the heart of this nation to be developed, applied, vindicated, disseminated, until all the nations should see it, feel it, accept and incorporate it into their forms of government, and so empower it to carry true Christian liberty to every dweller upon the earth. This, distinctively, is our mission. For this God brought us into being as a nation. This is our part in the world’s struggle; this the work God has assigned us to do.

We have accomplished this mission in part. First, we have *organized* the principle in question, and given it a visible, vital form, in our civil government. This government, framed by our fathers, is doubtless in some respects imper-



fect, as every thing human must needs be. Its working has been attended with friction at times—and there will be friction in our world as long as there is sin in it—but as compared with other human governments, we may say assuredly that ours gives more of the blessings of liberty to the people as a whole—that it accords more in its working with the declaration of human equality upon which it is based—than any other government on earth. In theory, and in all ordinary practice, it gives to all citizens the largest measure of liberty compatible with their real good. Local exceptions, state or municipal rather than national in their bearing, sadly mar, it is true, the beauty of our record. But these, like the spots on the sun, are specially apparent when internal convulsions are throwing out with special brilliance the light which they make glorious by contrast. We see special reason for thanksgiving to God, therefore, in the fact that our national government was organized, and has been worked, in the main, according to the principle that all men are by nature free and equal.

We have accomplished our mission in part, secondly, by *diffusing* this principle in its vital energy, so that there is probably not a civilized nation on the globe, whose government is not in a measure liberalized by our influence. For the last fourscore years this embodied principle of human liberty and equality as seen in our history, has worked like leaven in the musty lump of despotism that curses the old world, and millions in Europe, in Asia, and even in Africa, have had their burdens lightened by us without knowing their benefactors. The silent influence of this example which our nation has set in the direction of liberty, both civil and religious, has crept into the most bigoted and oppressive governments of Europe, and is destined, if we continue a nation, to stir to its profoundest depths that dead sea of bigotry and organized oppression, which covers in intellectual and moral stupor, the masses of a whole continent. The love of liberty has been kindled there, and its demands have been met already by concessions which the safety and the very existence of thrones and dynasties required.

Not only by the contact of governments with each other, but also, and more perhaps, by the commingling of peoples, has our influence been sent abroad. During a single month, nearly thirty thousand immigrants have been welcomed to our shores, representing England, Ireland, Wales, Scotland, Holland, Sweden, Belgium, Poland, Russia, Austria, Italy, Turkey, Spain, besides some of the nations of Asia and some of the islands of the sea. These immigrants catch the spirit of liberty, and send it back in their words of salutation to the friends they left behind. A recent estimate places the number of these foreign-born residents in our land, as high as four millions. And with these millions of once crushed and oppressed people breathing the atmosphere and sharing in the blessings of freedom and equality here among us, and daily sending back their free thoughts to the firesides of kindred groaning under the pressure of French, Austrian, Russian or Turkish rule, how can it be otherwise than that this spirit of liberty should be diffused by us all through old Europe? And what wonder if her despots and aristocrats rejoice in our misfortunes? What wonder if their "Floridas" and "Alabamas" and "Tallahasses" easily slip through the meshes of a neutrality whose zeal for belligerent rights is stimulated by such palpable self-interest? Despotism carries in its very nature the element of fear. Aristocracy is but intensified selfishness. And are not these social telegrams, running over mystic wires from our midst into the despotisms of the old world and kindling in every province a desire for liberty, like the foxes and the firebrands of Samson in the corn-fields of the Philistines? And is not God's hand clearly seen in the wonderful diffusiveness which has in this and other ways characterized the great principles upon which our government is founded? No sooner were we firmly established as a power among the nations, having "liberty and equality" as our banner-motto, than God opened before us thus marvelously the channels of positive influence abroad, and gave us a special mission to fill the world with the priceless blessings we ourselves had received. This is our part as a nation in the world's struggle for redemption.

We were fulfilling this high mission with a measure of success that made tyrants everywhere tremble. But success has in it an element of danger. Charmed by the *sound* of that word, upon which in our prosperity we had rung every conceivable change in holiday orations and songs, we lost sight little by little of its *sense*. In our prosperity, and by it, we were blinded to the fact, that enemies were plotting and working to rob the word liberty of its meaning, while they kept us beguiled by the frequent repetition of its sound. Charmed by the reiteration of the word itself, we were criminally remiss in guarding its sense and vindicating its claims. In this our remissness the enemies of liberty found their opportunity; and all our national troubles are upon us to-day as the penalty of this remissness. If we review the matter candidly, and observe how near we came to a national repudiation of that which is the distinctive glory of this nation, we shall see special cause for thanksgiving to God, in the fact that we are to-day defending rather than surrendering that pearl of great price—that discovered treasure, purchased by our fathers.

We have not yet as a nation repudiated that which is our distinctive glory. State and municipal laws have indeed trampled it under foot with a measure of impunity. Under the plea that our fathers did not understand the language of their great “declaration” as we now interpret it, a prolonged effort has been made to secure a national repudiation of this vital principle. The effort has been as wily as it has been persistent. The steps of its progress are clearly marked in our history. And the service to which God is calling us now as a nation, is the defence of that great principle which we have embodied in our national government, and which as a nation we have diffused so widely in the world, against the final, fierce assault of its enemies.

I have said this service has been rendered necessary by our past remissness. Not that we have been wholly ignorant of danger; but that we have been timid, and hesitating, and reluctant in meeting boldly the real issue. We have supposed that a compromise was possible, by which the friends

and the enemies of liberty could be tenants in common of the same domain. We have coveted the profits of a guilty co-partnership. For the sake of these, we have parted with our consistency. In his letter to Timothy, Paul says that "the love of money is the root of all evil; which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." God has permitted us to exemplify this language of the apostle, in a most signal manner.

The enemies of liberty have from the first sought to make the glorious mission to which God has called us a failure. Jealousy and selfish rivalry have indeed kept the monarchies of Europe from any combined effort against us in open conflict. But there has been no lack of combination in secret conclave. These enemies have had an understanding with each other these many years, and have planned, and purposed, and watched for an opportunity to execute their nefarious purposes. As evidence of this, take the following language uttered by the Duke of Richmond, while Governor of the Canadas, and but a little before his death. "So long as the government of the United States exists no European prince will be safe on his throne, and the sovereigns of Europe are aware of it, and they have determined upon its destruction, and have come to an understanding on this subject, and have decided on the means to accomplish it, and they will eventually succeed, by subversion rather than conquest. All the low and surplus and disaffected population of Europe will be carried into that country, and the European governments will favor that course. This will create a majority of low population. These men will become citizens, and be invested with the right of suffrage. Different grades of society will be created by the elevation of a few, and by degrading the many. To make them agree in political affairs will be like mixing oil and water. Hence discord, anarchy, civil war, and some popular individual will assume the government and restore order, and the sovereigns of Europe will sustain him."\*

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\*The above language is reported by Mr. H. G. Gates, of Montreal, who was present.

Did the Duke of Richmond so long ago discern in Jefferson Davis, that "popular individual" whom the sovereigns of Europe would favor? Probably not—yet where are the real sympathies of the English, French, Austrian and Spanish governments in this struggle of ours? Besides, compare the records of our elections during the last quarter of a century—compare the riotous proceedings which have attended upon these elections in some places, with this prophetic language of one as thoroughly posted in the politics of Europe during his day as any man then living, and what is your inference? Can it be less than this?—liberty here has enemies, and is fearfully imperiled by their machinations.

Or listen to the learned Schlegel, lecturing in Vienna, under the special patronage of Metternich, who was the very incarnation of hatred to liberty. "Send your refuse population to the United States under the control of the Jesuits. They will keep the foreign population separate and distinct from the American. They will prevent amalgamation, and a distinct political organization may be formed. Their ballot-boxes are left open. You are invited to take possession of them. Do this and the work is done."\*

In the light of this language used by Richmond and Schlegel, read the issues of the "Freeman's Journal," or the "Metropolitan Record" of New York. Or hear the sensible Archbishop Percell of Ohio, in his protest against this opposition to the government by "certain rash, irreverent, and thoughtless men of *our communion*," say:—"Did they not reflect, that its downfall would be hailed with acclamation by our hereditary oppressors across the ocean?" And if the downfall of this government would thus be hailed with acclamation by the ruling powers of the old world, is it strange that this rebellion is their pet?

Now put side by side with these statements and facts that significant occurrence of late, when, amid the most horrible scenes of pillage, and murder, and arson in the first city of the nation, where all the fiends of that hell, the depraved heart, were for a time let loose, the Governor of the Empire

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\* Lecture 18th of the course, as quoted by Mr. Levin.

state, called to his aid a gouty Archbishop to soothe and mollify the dear, excited people, and say—what does this mean, if not that liberty here is to be defended, or it will be lost? What does this mean, if not that we have among us forces that are shaped and controlled abroad? Yes, the great principle for which we are to-day contending—for which we are pouring out profusely from our wealth of treasure and of noble blood, has leagued against it all the ruling powers of the old world, as well as the ambitious demagogues and haughty aristocrats of the new. By stealthy steps, for half a century or more, these enemies of liberty have been marshaling their forces for combined action whenever the way should be opened. And the way has now been opened. By our remissness—by our timidity—by our covetousness—by our criminal disregard of that first principle in the great declaration which our fathers made the foundation of this government, the way has been opened. A review of the case makes this too obvious.

American Slavery, in its essential nature, its actual workings, and its positive affinities has always been opposed to this principle of liberty; and at length, like the viper nourished to life in the bosom of its protector, lifted its hissing head and struck its fangs into the very flesh that warmed it. The proof of this is on every side of us, and crowds the brief records of our national progress.

The system of slavery was first *tolerated* by this government, (not without earnest protest) as an existing evil, to be removed as soon as possible. Proof of this may be found in the debates of the “convention” which framed our constitution. In that body, George Mason of Virginia, grandfather of the rebel emissary to Europe, said: “Slavery discourages the arts and manufactures. The poor despise labor when performed by slaves. They produce the most pernicious effect on manners. Every master of slaves is born a petty tyrant.”\* The major part of the delegates were of like sentiment, and the final adjustment was made with the understanding, that if left to itself, the evil would gradually disappear.

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\* Madison's Papers, Vol. 3d, page 1390.

Next came the claim that slavery is a *state institution*, having a place and rights as such, but in no proper sense national in its character or claims. This was a step in advance. It was taken cautiously, but firmly, and without much opposition.

This point gained for the institution, it was immediately, by dint of menace, pushed into the attitude of a *claimant* with rights to unoccupied territory, and its voice became so imperious, that the adjustment of compromise was appealed to, under the magic leadership of Kentucky's great orator. And when compromises had served their end in nourishing the greedy parasite, they were buried with their great Apostle, and their obligations utterly repudiated.

Then came the era of *constitutional recognition and right*, with the immortal Webster as its peerless champion, and the monetary, commercial, manufacturing, and aristocratic influences of the nation linked to his logic; and all these tremendous forces guided by the great law of expediency. And when the constitution had served its purpose by the most glaring perversions, sanctioned in part, though with reluctance, by its accredited expounder, it was defiantly trampled into the dust that fell upon his coffin.

There was but one more point to be carried by its enemies, and liberty here would lie pulseless, shrouded and coffined for its burial.

In the Temple at Jerusalem there was an apartment called the "holy of holies." Into that, no profane feet might ever enter. The High Priest only—and he after the most careful lustrations—might enter once in the year for himself and the people.

Our fathers put a "holy of holies" in this temple of Liberty which they reared. Never, until the High Priest of this temple should open this inner shrine, to the profane tread of prejudice, partizanship, or bribery, could liberty perish. To the assault of this sacred shrine, therefore, the enemy directed all his hellish arts. Nor was the movement vigorously resisted. Oh! "tell it not in Gath—publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters



of the Philistines rejoice—lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph!” The High Priest that year stood in the door of the temple to meet and to greet the intruders. At their bidding, he said respecting that declaration of our fathers which we have seen to be the germ of our nationality: “The men who framed this declaration knew that it would not in any part of the civilized world be supposed to embrace the negro race.”\*

Thus was the case seemingly carried against liberty—against that very declaration of liberty which was laid as the foundation of this government. The “Ark of the Covenant” of liberty had been taken, and was in the hands of the Philistines. But there was one more appeal possible. The God of liberty had been inquired of, and already was there heard “the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees.” Outraged humanity carried the case by appeal to the people. The people were at first startled by the honest, distinct avowal of one, whose voice was just beginning to get the ear of the nation. “I believe this government can not permanently endure half slave and half free. It will become all one thing, or all the other,”† said the future standard bearer of the nation. The people heard, and rose in the majesty of their strength to determine which it should be. In the midst of the conflict for the recovery of the Ark so nearly lost, the High Priest, like Eli of old, has fallen at the gate of the Temple—“for he was an old man, and his eyes were dim.”

This appeal to the people, echoed back to the West from the heart of the Empire state, in the language of her great diplomatist—“the United States must and will, sooner or later, become either entirely a slave-holding nation, or entirely a free-labor nation”‡—roused all the energies of the foe, who was glorying in his apparent victory over liberty, and in the delirium of his wrath, he raised openly the standard of rebellion, and sent his emissaries through all this land, and through the nations of the old world, that the enemies of liberty in all lands might combine to crush out once and forever both the name and the thing.

\* Taney, in Dred Scott decision.

† Lincoln’s speech, June 17, 1858.

‡ Seward’s speech, October 25, 1858.



The real question at issue then is this—"Is liberty the natural right of all men?" And we to-day are in the furnace of conflict, heated to seven fold intensity by the vast combinations of selfishness that are arrayed against us. With a united South, countenanced and encouraged by practical sympathy in many of the free states, and helped in all possible ways by the governing classes in Europe, while all the elements of discord promised by the Duke of Richmond and the Prince of Jesuitism are at work in our midst; with the odds thus fearfully against us, we have lifted again the dishonored banner of the nation and have said—"WE WILL DEFEND IT."

It took us one full year to realize that we were actually fighting an enemy. It took us another to learn that an army without a *leader* is powerless. A third year was spent in correcting the blunders of the first two, and in gigantic preparations for real work; and now at the end, or near the end of the fourth year of our struggle, the Nation, as such, is summoned before the great Ruler to utter in unison an anthem of Thanksgiving for the Divine favor and help thus far.

First then, let us thank God to-day, for the position we occupy among the powers of earth, as defenders of the first and most important right of man, which is assailed by the allied forces of despotism. We are indeed struggling to suppress rebellion. This is our specific work. Ours is not war in any such sense as properly introduces any where the question of belligerent rights as between nations. We are grappling with rebellion. But it is rebellion, having the helpful sympathy of all persons and powers at home and abroad, which hate liberty. This conflict assumes therefore the most stupendous proportions, and if we fully succeed in it, we shall occupy through coming time an apostolic rank among the free nations of the world. If we fully succeed in it, the result will as surely shake the foundations of aristocratic and despotic power all over the world, as the pebble's ripple pushes itself to the verge of the pool whose waters it disturbs. Let us thank God, then, for assigning us such a place and part in the world's struggle for redemption.

Again, let us thank God to-day, for the signal successes

which have crowned the efforts of our government thus far. We have had humiliating defeats and disasters. In the beginning of the struggle, when the government and the people were only half in earnest, and guiding their movements by the laws of expediency, there was a sad record made, most humiliating to our pride. But no sooner had the government and the people put themselves measurably right on the record respecting that fundamental truth—"all men are created equal, and entitled to liberty"—than a terrible incubus was removed, and the war-chariot, as God's avenger of wrong, began to move with crushing momentum upon the enemy. Our record for the entire period since this truth was distinctly written on our battle-banner, has been a series of solid, brilliant victories, without a serious defeat. And to-day, the enemies of liberty here and in Europe, hold their breath with fear lest the next act in the awful drama shall bring final and utter defeat to this great rebellion. For all this let us thank God to-day. And as the notes of victory from the Shenandoah are met by, and mingle with, like notes of victory from Missouri, while the magnificent armies of liberty around Richmond and Atlanta tighten their hold upon the lungs of this writhing monster, let us lift up our hearts with our voices, and sing in grand chorus this one hundredth Psalm. "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands—for the Lord is good—we are his people."

Again, let us thank God to-day, for the heroic bearing of our soldiers and seamen, who are so nobly daring, doing, dying in this glorious cause. The world's history hitherto furnishes no such wealth of heroic and self-sacrificing devotion to a great principle as this struggle is developing. The altar of liberty groans beneath the burden of noble victims already laid upon it. Husbands, fathers, sons, brothers, the truest and noblest ever known, have come forth from every pursuit, profession, rank or condition in life, and offered themselves for service in vindication of the principle assailed. By hundreds of thousands they are to-day cheerfully enduring all the hardships of the service; facing boldly the dangers of sickness, imprisonment, death, and a captivity often worse than death, that they may lift again to an undisputed sover-

eignty over this whole people, in view of the world, that starry emblem of liberty received from our fathers. And shall we not to-day as we think of this wealth of earnest manhood which God beforehand garnered in our nation for this very time, thank Him for it? And while we recognize the provident care of God in the Christian and patriotic manhood which this struggle has already brought into view, and thank and praise Him for it as our visible means of success, we will also send assurances to our army and navy in every proper way, that we appreciate their struggles and their successes. The victorious generals shall have their meed of honor. But, in bestowing this, we will not forget that without the patience, the vigor, the daring and the determination of the subaltern and the private, we could have no victorious generals. To our brave soldiers and seamen, one and all, let us give in every possible way the assurance that we appreciate their efforts. In contributions and services for their spiritual and bodily comfort, let us be more liberal and earnest than ever.

But some of them—alas! how many, have already sealed their witness for liberty in this sublime struggle, with their blood. Shall they, or their sorrowing kindred be forgotten by us in our thanksgiving song to-day? No, illustrious martyrs! if we forget you—if we allow you to be forgotten, let our right hands forget their cunning.

Citizens who love liberty—who would acknowledge your obligations to the heroic dead—my eye falls often upon a choice, appropriate, beautiful spot, where a monument might be placed by this people, every man, woman and child bringing an offering for the work—a monument which this busy population will see as they come and go in their daily avocations, and on festive and sacred days—a monument upon which shall be inscribed the names of those sons of New Britain who have fallen or may yet fall in this struggle—and I seem to see fathers and mothers, widows and orphans, gathered in groups around that monument, looking through tears of grateful affection upon the several names set in glory there, while they say to each other in whispers of honorable pride—“*They are not forgotten by those for whom they died.*”

I see the children and youth of coming generations gathered around that monument, and by a new arithmetic computing the cost of liberty—estimating the value of government—reckoning the worth of peace.

I see *young men* there, feeding in silent thought great and noble purposes of life—drinking in the spirit of self-sacrificing devotion to great principles—catching the inspiration of heroic endeavor, and carried by the genius of the place into a holy alliance with the cause for which these heroes died.

Is this wholly a vision, not having in it the germ of an ultimate realization? While we thank God for the men he thus provided for our help in the day of need, shall we not also perpetuate their example for the quickening and guidance of future generations?

Finally we should thank God to-day for that sublimest of all our successes in this prolonged struggle, achieved on the 8th of November, 1864. This was a victory, not of party as against party—not of candidate as against candidate, merely, for of such a victory this is not the place to speak—but a victory of principles over prejudice; a victory of patriotism over partisanship; a victory of right and justice over covetousness and selfish ease. Those who understood the nature of this terrific struggle—those who knew what home and foreign allies this unscrupulous rebellion was in league with—those who had watched the pulse of that vast popular element which the Duke of Richmond said would side with despotism, and which the Austrian premier declared to be under Jesuit control—those who realized what fearful combinations were silently concentrating upon that momentous day, watched its approach with unutterable misgivings. There was indeed an outward show of cheerfulness and confidence, but deep down in the stoutest souls which have stood for liberty hitherto through sunshine and cloud, there were forebodings which prudence dared not whisper. The case, carried by appeal to the highest power known to our government, was to be distinctly, finally settled. The people were to render their verdict, and under circumstances which gave room and play to every warping influence of southern sympathy, foreign Jesuitism, and partisan prejudice. Add to this the depression

of spirit which weighed down the soul of the nation after three and a half years of unremitted struggle—the slain brought home to almost every hamlet—the desolation of households all over the land—the taxes touching every individual—the end promised long before, not yet in sight—and who will say there was not great danger that the popular heart would sink, and the old, easy method of compromise be tried once more?

Think of the real questions which were submitted to this people on that memorable day. With almost every house a house of mourning, and almost every heart lacerated and bleeding at the remembrance of the slain, the question put to this people was—“Will you give more sons, brothers, husbands, fathers, for the defence of liberty?” With the pressure of taxation already so great that not even a match or a pin could escape it, the question was—“Will you give more money for the defence of liberty?” With the whole industrial enterprise of the nation diverted from its wonted channels; with great financial questions baffling the wisdom of our wise men, and threatening general disaster in all departments of business; the question was—“Will you risk yet more in the defence of liberty?”

The friends and the enemies of liberty all over the world waited in tremulous anxiety to hear what answers the people would give to these questions which came right home to every hearthstone and every heart. We have heard their answer. The despots of the old world have heard their answer, and it made thrones tremble, and tyrants turn pale. The rebels heard it, and every purpose, and every power of theirs was shaken by the sound of it. With all the infernal combinations of this great rebellion in full view—with the awful visage of war right before them, and its crushing burdens weighing them down—with secret conspiracies springing to light on every hand and threatening universal devastation if the struggle was continued—the people, the free, sovereign people, after solemn deliberation, came forth and lifted their hands to Heaven, and said before God and the nations: *“Liberty first; peace next; war if it must be; disunion never. We will give more men; we will give more money; we will*

*give more heart treasures; we will give everything for the defence and maintainance of that great and sacred principle, placed by our fathers as the chief corner stone in their temple of liberty."*

Such was the verdict of a great people on the 8th of November, 1864. Is there a lover of liberty in all the world who will not unite with us in thanksgiving to God that such a verdict was rendered by this people in the face of such frowning prospects? Shall we not in view of it enter into these gates with thanksgiving, and into these courts with praise? Shall we not say to the world which witnessed this sublime spectacle, "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands?" Shall we not gather new inspiration from this grand uprising of the people, and lift aloft with a steadier hand that noble old banner—*red*, in token of the heroic blood that defends it—*white*, in token of the pure principle it symbolizes—*blue*, in token of its heavenly origin—and as we see it floating above us, shall we not emphasize afresh our thanksgiving anthem to Him in whom we trust, while to the heroic army and navy as God's ministers, we send this message, with our earnest greetings:

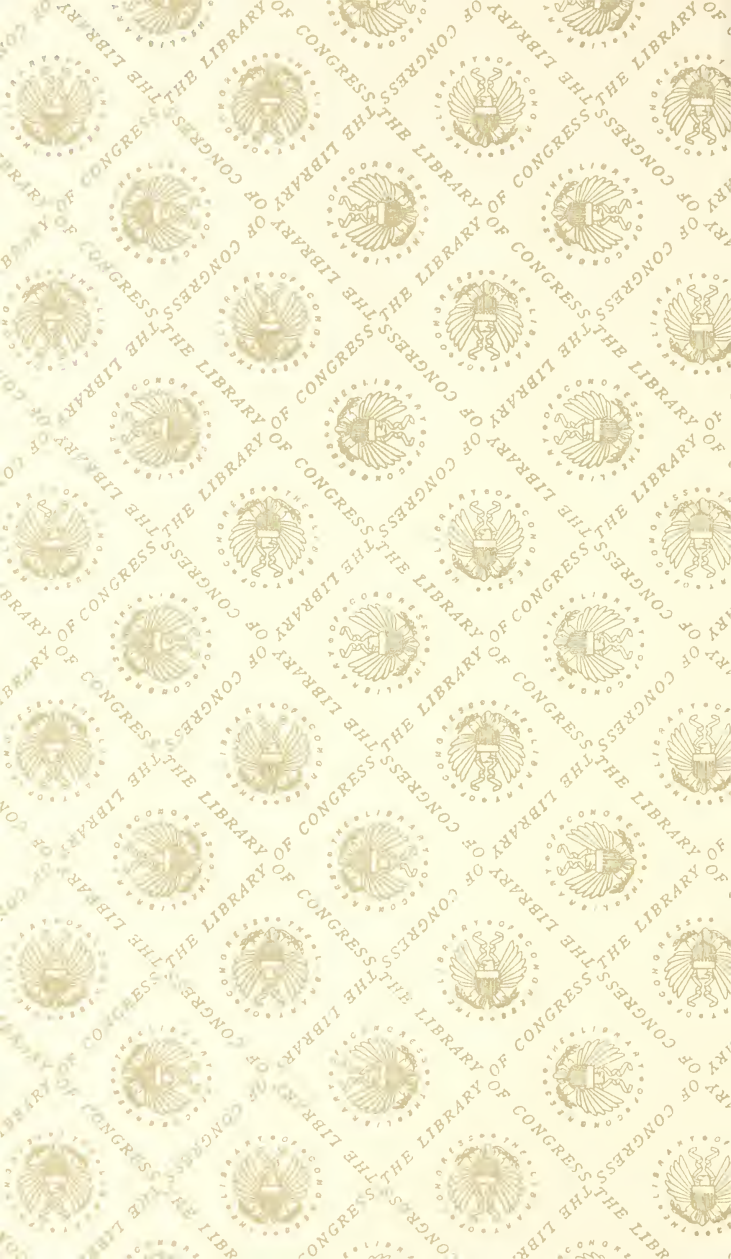
"Bear on our flag over all the land:  
And unto them who beneath it stand  
Glory forever and high renown—  
Who conquer the foe and trample them down.  
On then, over the field in a torrent pour;  
Through the clashing of swords and the cannon's roar,  
Forward, rank upon rank, till the day is done:  
By valor alone the battle is won.

Danger shall menace the land in vain,  
Ever united it shall remain;  
Strong in the faith of a holy right,  
With God for their guide, our patriots fight;  
All the pleasers of home they have left behind—  
For the trials of war they have all resigned;  
Let the trumpet sound, and its note shall call  
On men who have vowed to conquer, or fall."

May God speed the right—AMEN.











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